



Chairman Wittke, Vice Chair Armstrong and Members of the Committee on Jobs and the Economy,

My name is Shawn Phetteplace and I am the State Manager for the Main Street Alliance's Wisconsin chapter. We are a small business advocacy group working on healthcare, childcare, paid family and medical leave and COVID relief policy. Since August we have grown to over 100 member businesses across Wisconsin from Viroqua to Menomonie to Green Bay and our two largest cities, Madison and Milwaukee. Thank you for allowing our organization to testify today. **We are registered as 'opposed' to this legislation because we disagree with the process and the scope of the measure.**

We support grants for small businesses but believe the proposal before the committee doesn't go far enough.

First, the Governor clearly has authority to spend the American Rescue Plan funds provided to Wisconsin. Last spring with the first CARES Act funds Speaker Vos stated, "You and your administration have the sole authority to allocate the federal stimulus money." We agree with that statement and believe that any attempt to stall these monies getting to those in need will badly hurt Wisconsin main street business. Assistance delayed is assistance denied and we have real concerns that if this aid becomes a political football it will mean that those in need will not get it in time to help them the most.

Second, \$200 million dollars is woefully inadequate to meet the need of small businesses in Wisconsin. The Governor's proposed \$600 million would much better be able to help provide support to businesses that have fallen through the cracks during the pandemic through no fault of their own. We have been happy to provide feedback to WEDC to ensure that the next round of funding for small businesses is targeted at those in need and that those dollars are spent wisely and fairly. We have been thankful to WEDC and the Governor for providing funding that helped 53,000 businesses throughout the state but there is still more work to do to heal the wounds from this deadly pandemic.

Lastly, we have concerns about the proposed \$1 billion dollars in property tax relief that has been proposed by the Majority. While we await analysis by the Legislative Fiscal Bureau it is important to note that much of this property tax relief will likely go towards wealthy individuals rather than a more targeted approach as advanced by the Governor. We look

Jobs and the Economy Committee, Assembly, 1 PM hearing on 4/5 re: AB233

forward to learning more about the impact of this aid and who would stand to benefit the most from it.

We urge you to vote no on Assembly Bill 233.

With that, I would like to introduce Main Street Alliance member Jessica Wartenweiler, owner of the Tinsmith, a wedding venue just down the street, to discuss why we need \$600 million for small business.
